



## MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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### **HB 19 - Higher Education - Maryland Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program - Establishment**

#### **House Appropriations Committee**

**March 10, 2026**

#### **SUPPORT**

**Donna S. Edwards**

#### **Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 19. On behalf of 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

Maryland's public sector is powered by dedicated State employees who keep our agencies functioning smoothly, our communities safe, and our government accountable. Yet, too many of these workers carry significant student loan debt that follows them for much of their careers, often forcing them to find a second or third job to keep pace with payments.

Programs like this work. The federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF) has helped millions of public service workers across the country and, as of February 2026, has delivered more than \$80 billion in loan relief. This directly correlates to stability for workers who choose careers serving the public.

HB 19 brings that proven model to Maryland. By establishing the Maryland Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, the State is making an investment in its workforce. This legislation will strengthen the State's ability to attract, recruit, and retain a high-quality public workforce that Marylanders deserve.

A program like this could leave a lasting impact on Maryland's public sector by helping thousands of State employees manage the burden of student loan debt. HB 19 is an investment in the people who keep Maryland running every day.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on HB 19.



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